

1981

REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN  
BEFORE  
PLANNED PARENTHOOD

MAY 29, 1981

COSTS TO SOCIETY OF UNWANTED CHILDREN, OF MALNUTRITION, OF PERMANENT DISABILITIES, AND OF THE LIVES DISRUPTED AND HANDICAPPED BY UNWANTED PREGNANCY.

ASIDE FROM THE SO-CALLED "FISCAL CONSERVATISM", SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES HAVE A DIFFERENT AGENDA FOR THE CONGRESS. THEY ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE US ALL MORE "MORAL" AND TO IMPOSE THEIR OWN NARROW NOTIONS OF MORALITY ON THE REST OF US.

THEY ARE LAWMAKERS WHO HAVE NEVER UNDERSTOOD THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN HEALTH POLICY AND CRIMINAL LAW AND - NOT UNDERSTANDING - ARE NOW PREPARED TO WITHHOLD HEALTH CARE TO MILLIONS AS A PUNISHMENT FOR ANY SEXUAL ACTIVITY.

THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT THESE ADOLESCENTS THEY ARE PUNISHING ARE NOT SINFUL TEENAGERS; THEY ARE OUR CHILDREN.

IN DISPENSING THIS PUNISHMENT, THESE MEN ARE PREPARED TO IGNORE THE CONSEQUENCES: THE EPIDEMIC OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY, THE RISE IN INFANT MORTALITY, THE SPREAD OF UNDETECTED VENEREAL DISEASE, AND MORE--NOT FEWER--ABORTIONS.

FOR PLANNED PARENTHOOD, WHEN WE PUT TOGETHER THE IMPACT OF THE BUDGET CUTS <sup>AND</sup> BLOCK GRANTS, COMBINED WITH THE MORAL MAJORITY RUN AMUCK, ONE CONCLUSION IS CLEAR: THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS DECLARED WAR ON PLANNED PARENTHOOD, AS AN ORGANIZATION AND AS AN IDEA.

THE WAR IS CAMOUFLAGED AS A DEBATE ON NUMBERS AND FLEXIBILITY BECAUSE REAGAN IS NOT WILLING TO FACE THE ISSUE OF FAMILY PLANNING HEAD ON. THEY ARE AFRAID BECAUSE THEY UNDERSTAND THAT FAMILY PLANNING HAS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT, BOTH IN THE CONGRESS AND IN THE COUNTRY.

SO RATHER THAN CONFRONT THIS SUPPORT, THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOW ATTEMPTING TO PASS THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM ON TO THE STATES, WHERE THEY SUSPECT - PERHAPS RIGHTLY - THAT THE PROGRAM MAY NOT SURVIVE TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO ALL WHO NEED AND DESIRE IT. THEY KNOW THAT UNDER THE TITLE TWENTY PROGRAM TEN STATES HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO PROVIDE ANY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CONTRACEPTION.

I PLEDGE TO YOU THAT THIS CAMOUFLAGED WAR ON FAMILY PLANNING WILL NOT STAY HIDDEN. WE WILL FORCE THE ISSUE OF FAMILY PLANNING TO A DIRECT VOTE IN THE HOUSE AND WE WILL WATCH CLOSELY TO SEE IF THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO CLAIM TO BE OPPOSED TO ABORTION WILL VOTE AGAINST THE ONE PROGRAM WHICH CAN BE REASONABLY EXPECTED TO LOWER THE ABORTION RATE.

I EXPECT WE WILL WIN THAT VOTE.

FROM THE SENATE SIDE, A NEW PROGRAM IS BEING OFFERED - NOT FOR STATES TO RUN, BUT FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT - TO ESTABLISH CHASTITY CENTERS AND PROMOTE SEXUAL ABSTINENCE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE. THIS PROGRAM WHICH WILL COST \$30 MILLION HAS AS ITS ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE TO TEACH TEENAGE GIRLS TO SAY "NO".

WHAT A WASTE OF MONEY. WHAT A PROPOSAL FROM PEOPLE WHO CALL THEMSELVES FISCAL CONSERVATIVES.

WE CANNOT IGNORE THE REALITY OF TEENAGE SEXUALITY. WE CANNOT IGNORE THE 1.1 MILLION ADOLESCENT PREGNANCIES OR THE 300,000 PREGNANCIES AVERTED. WE CANNOT IGNORE THE FACT THAT MORE BABIES WILL BE BORN WITH VENEREAL DISEASE OR WITH RELATED DEFECTS THIS YEAR THAN WERE STRICKEN BY THE POLIO EPIDEMIC OF THE DECADE OF THE FIFTIES.

I KNOW THAT SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, AND FAMILIES HAVE HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY WITH ADOLESCENT SEXUAL ACTIVITY, BUT I FIND IT BEYOND BELIEF THAT ANYONE WOULD BRING IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OVER.

AS THE PARENT OF A TEENAGE DAUGHTER, I WANT TO TEACH HER MY VALUES, VALUES IN WHICH SEXUAL ACTIVITY IS NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY AND [REDACTED] IS MOST APPROPRIATE AS A PART OF A MARITAL COMMITMENT.

THANK YOU, SENATORS. I THINK I CAN DO THIS WITHOUT YOUR ASSISTANCE.

THIS ADMINISTRATION KNOWS THAT WHEN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES FACE THE DAY-TO-DAY UNCERTAINTY OF FUNDING OR OF THE PURPOSE OF THE AGENCY, THE MOST COMPETENT EMPLOYEES WILL SOON LEAVE.

WE WILL HAVE IN THEIR PLACE A CADRE OF OFFICIALS WHOSE ONLY QUALIFICATIONS ARE IN POLITICAL IDEOLOGY BUT NOT IN PUBLIC HEALTH OR PREVENTIVE MEDICINE. THE MOST OBVIOUS EXAMPLE OF THIS NEW TYPE OF OFFICIAL IS THE PRESIDENT'S CHOICE FOR SURGEON GENERAL, DR. C. EVERETT KOOP. DR. KOOP IS WITHOUT DOUBT AN EXCELLENT PEDIATRIC SURGEON, BUT THE MAJOR REASONS FOR HIS APPOINTMENT AS THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER OF THE NATION ARE OBVIOUSLY HIS VIEWS ON ABORTION, FAMILY PLANNING, AND AMNIOCENTESIS, NOT ANY BACKGROUND IN PUBLIC HEALTH.

WHILE IT IS APPARENT THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION IS SET TO END FAMILY PLANNING, WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO ANY PERSON THE INFORMATION AND ABILITY TO CHOOSE WHEN HE OR SHE WISHES TO HAVE A CHILD AND TO BECOME A PARENT.

IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY, LET US RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE TO HAVE DIFFERING VIEWS. IN SUCH A SOCIETY, NO GROUP SHOULD SEEK TO IMPOSE ITS LIFESTYLE OR VALUES ON OTHERS. WE MUST DEFEAT THOSE WHO WOULD FORCE ALL WOMEN TO CARRY BABIES TO TERM, THEIR CHILDREN TO PRAY IN THE SCHOOLS, AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO MAKE PERSONAL CHOICES FOR US.